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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 001969

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KPKO](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER COMPLAINS ABOUT CIAT COMMUNIQUE

REF: KINSHASA 1954

Classified By: DCM TDougherty for reasons 1.4 b/d.

1. (SBU) Foreign Minister Ramazani convoked the Kinshasa diplomatic corps the morning of November 30 to express the GDRC's unhappiness with CIAT's November 25 communique that took transition leaders to task for inaction on security sector reform, non-payment of salaries to the military, delays in enacting essential legislation, not holding regularly scheduled meetings of joint commissions and the Espace Presidentiel, and other issues central to the successful completion of the DRC's transition (reftel). CIAT's communique was issued after the 16 members of CIAT agreed that a clear message needed to be sent to transition leaders that urgent action and strong leadership on their part are needed. With the Ambassador in the east for a Congressional visit, DCM attended Ramazani's meeting.

2. (C) Ramazani said that his comments were not intended to be the official response of the GDRC, which he said would be forthcoming from the government's spokesman. He added that he had decided to meet with the entire diplomatic corps (and not just with CIAT) so that all would know what is being discussed. Quoting sections of the communique that he found objectionable, Ramazani said the communique had given the impression that transition leaders were indifferent to the needs of the military, that leaders were betraying the people, and the parliament was incapable of adopting legislation. He noted that the Amnesty Bill had been passed by parliament just the previous evening (septel to follow), and that the Electoral Law would be adopted immediately after the constitutional referendum. He made no specific references to military pay or security sector reform. As an aside about scheduled meetings not taking place, he said they had not been cancelled but only postponed. He pointed out that the meetings couldn't take place with various leaders and ministers not being available (comment: which of course was exactly CIAT's point).

3. (C) On several occasions, he admitted that the transition had problems, delays, and difficulties. While acknowledging that CIAT has a role in the transition as mandated in the Sun City Accord, he said that its recent communique reflected neither "solidarity" nor "collaboration." Noting that the transition's various factions have been working well together and have "come a long way," he asked rhetorically if it was now the time for CIAT to criticize. He repeatedly said that a communique released to the media was not the proper way to convey information, and said that CIAT and others could always pass messages through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (comment: which prompted some muted chuckling in the room since the Ministry is not known for efficiency or responsiveness). Ramazani stressed that any action that could erode confidence in the transition should be avoided, and that it was not right for CIAT "to go over the heads" of transition leaders by appealing to public opinion.

4. (C) Ramazani concluded by saying he would take three questions, "but no debate." Only the South African Ambassador responded, both in the absence of the dean and as a member of CIAT. In short remarks, he said that CIAT would continue to play a constructive role and was willing to meet as a group with the Foreign Minister. Ramazani then acknowledged that while CIAT's "intentions" might have been good, the "form" of the communique wasn't. The twenty-minute session then ended.

5. (C) Comment: The communique obviously stung many in the government, and Ramazani clearly had been instructed to convey displeasure. More of the same will no doubt be included in the official government response. Ramazani's concerns about the communique being released to the press need to be put in context, however. CIAT regularly issues communiques which are always reported by the press. The issue this time was that the communique was critical of the government.

6. (C) Comment continued: The intent of the communique was to send a clear message, and on that score it succeeded very well. In general the media welcomed CIAT's communique and concurred that the issues raised by CIAT urgently need to be addressed. With the exception of Ramazani's remark about some progress on the legislative front, it is telling that no

one in the government up to this point has yet said anything about the substance of the concerns raised by CIAT, nor taken any new action to allay those concerns. End comment.
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